

FILTER BED SYSTEMS

Although their design may have changed over the years, filter bed systems have been installed in Cuyahoga County for decades. Filter beds installed prior to the early 1970's typically utilized gravel as a filtration media. The beds consisted of clay tile pipes laid on top of a 15 to 24 inch thick bed of large gravel. A clay tile line was also placed below the gravel bed to act as a collection pipe. Wastewater from the septic tank would drain into the top pipes, filter through the gravel and be collected in the bottom line. This effluent was then discharged to the environment. Many of these systems are still in use today.

Unfortunately, these old gravel beds did not function well and did not have the ability to properly filter the sewage prior to discharging it to a ditch, stream or storm sewer. For this reason, approved filter sand has been utilized as the actual filtration media in more modern filter bed systems. Perforated pipe is laid in gravel both above and below the filter sand. The sand has a filtration capability that is far superior to that of gravel.

Filter bed systems installed in the last few decades typically use a splitter box, also known as a distribution box. This box contains a flow diversion device that directs the flow of wastewater to one side of the filter bed or the other. This allows one part of the bed to rest, while the other is in use. This may help extend the life span of your filter bed system. The flow diverter should be switched to alternate flow at least annually. For this reason, the flow diversion box must be kept to grade. If you do not know where it is located, contact your septic pumper, installer, or the Board of Health.

